

# The THOREAU SOCIETY BULLETIN

BULLETIN FORTY-ONE

FALL 1952

THOREAU, IMITATOR PLUS by Raymond Adams . . . . .

(Editor's Note: This is a paper delivered at the 1952 annual meeting of the Thoreau Society. Other papers by Miss Walker and Mrs. Wheeler will follow in early issues.)

Henry Thoreau is certainly one of the great originals of America. And yet, when one thinks about it, he did very few decidedly original things. One after another the things which have marked him and by which everybody knows him can be shown to have precedent in Concord or to have been within the pattern of activity here in Massachusetts or New England.

First in importance, his going to Walden Pond was not an unusual kind of thing to do. His college roommate Charles Stearns Wheeler, transcendentalist like Thoreau and like him at the time a protégé of Emerson, had built a house on the shore of Sandy Pond over in Lincoln while the two were classmates at Harvard; and Thoreau perhaps helped with the building of it and certainly stayed with Wheeler in it, even for as long as six weeks. Ellery Channing told what he remembered about it in 1883:

"Stearns Wheeler built a 'shanty' on Flint's Pond for the purpose of economy, for purchasing Greek books and going abroad to study. Whether Mr. Thoreau assisted him to build this shanty I cannot say, but I think he may have; also that he spent six weeks with him there. As Mr. Thoreau was not too original and inventive to follow the example of others, if good to him, it is very probably this undertaking of Stearns Wheeler, whom he regarded (as I think I have heard him say) a heroic character, suggested his own experiment on Walden. . . . Students, in all parts of the earth, have pursued a similar course from motives of economy, and to carry out some special study. Mr. Thoreau wished to study birds, flowers, and the stone age, just as Mr. Wheeler wished to study Greek."

But even aside from Wheeler, the idea was a commonplace one. Almost as soon as Emerson had bought the acres at Walden it was suggested that he build a retreat there. And, as we once heard at one of these meetings, he later went so far as to lay out the site and clear the paths for his own Walden House on the south shore of the pond.

Daniel Ricketson had a shanty at New Bedford. And the number of "shanties" used as retreats and isolated places for study was legion.

Thoreau's was but another. The number of times it was referred to by contemporaries as a "shanty" or a "hut" proves that in his time his action was not too unusual. His shanty was better built, partook of some of the permanence of a home, and was called by Thoreau himself a "house." But it was in the shanty tradition of his time. His house was further out of sight of home than most, but all of them had some remoteness, and Emerson planned one even farther from home. Thoreau may have stayed in his over longer periods, may be said to have actually lived in it - to have made it his abode; but even that is a matter of degree. Something like "going to Walden" was not too uncommon in the 1840's. And Henry Thoreau did it too.

Going to jail was not unknown either. Bronson Alcott had gone to jail more than three years before Thoreau over the same poll tax issue and had been credited by Sam Staples the jailer with having invited incarceration over "nothing but principle." Alcott's impracticality somehow always asserted itself: he invited incarceration on January 17, 1843, an inclement season in Concord jail. Thoreau showed his shrewdness by choosing to go to jail for the same principle in July. Moreover, Charles Lane the

friend of Alcott had also gone to jail in 1843 on the same charge. It was nothing new in Concord for transcendentalists to be put in jail. Maybe that's the force of Henry Thoreau's remark, "Why aren't you here, Waldo?"

Not paying poll tax was itself no new issue nor any mere transcendental crotchet. The relating of it to the slavery issue may have been an addition. But the question of paying poll tax was the leading party issue in Massachusetts in 1843. At that time the Democrats controlled the Senate and the Whigs the House. Reform of poll tax was a key policy of Democratic Governor Morton. The Senate regularly passed measures to reduce the poll tax, and the House as regularly defeated them. In the entire session but one Democratic law succeeded in being passed, a law releasing boys 16 to 20 from poll tax, perhaps on the theory that a poll tax was unfair for people not admitted to the polls. The point for us is that thinking about poll tax and protesting against it did not begin with Thoreau.

Even being unofficial recorder of the weather and the seasons and volunteer observer of nature at all times was not unprecedented before Thoreau appointed himself to that office. In fact, one of the most intriguing phenomena in American cultural history, and one about which I have not yet found a satisfactory account, is the flourishing of the local natural history societies between 1800 and 1830. Apparently every New England town had such a society and enough volunteer observers to bring in specimens for the famous natural history cabinets in town hall, schoolhouse, or parish house. And enough local pre-Thoreaus developed to lecture to the townspeople about their own wild apples or autumnal tints, and then to go over to nearby towns to repeat the lecture where wild apples were almost as tart and where autumn was tinted somewhat similarly (though, of course, it always frosted earlier in Concord than anywhere else, and still does, thus giving to Concord wild apples a better tang and to Concord autumnal tints a livelier crimson). Thence came the New England Lyceum, one of the great contributions to culture for all America, growing out of this simple exchange of information about neighborhood nature watched and reported by self-appointed observers.

Thoreau himself knew many of these town naturalists. He made it a point to hunt them up in his travels. And once, in Vermont I believe, found one so much to his liking that he stayed over in his town a day or two for talk and a comparison of notes -- for he dearly loved to talk.

Even absenting oneself from church and touring the woods was not anything original with Thoreau. In fact, it was so regular a thing right here in Concord that one of the stock jokes of transcendental times was for a Concordian to tell a visitor that there were three religious societies in town: the First Parish Church, the Trinitarian Church, and the Walden Pond Association.

I hasten to say that even though every major action of Thoreau had precedent, he himself was not motivated by imitation. He remained an individual as we all remain individuals by having his qualities in unique combination. It is the proportions we keep that make each of us an individual unlike any other one among the thousands that seem to be our type. So Henry Thoreau had traits in such concentration and in such combination that one simply cannot use the word "type" in connection with him. He especially was no type, for his like surely had not happened before, nor no archetype, for he set no pattern -- neither for Burroughs nor for Jefferies nor for Hudson, to name three nature writers between his time and ours. There were certainly no "Thoreaus" before him, and there have been none since.

But we cannot settle our problem quite so easily. It remains true that persons within his ken did go to the same jail for the same reason he did; and people did live in shanties even on the shores of ponds for the same reasons he did, and they did explore their New England countryside and record their nature lore much as he did. Point for point what was it that Henry Thoreau did with these things that makes us remember him and tend to forget the others?

Imagine if you can how Alcott went to jail and how Thoreau went. Your guess is as good as mine, but I think any of us can imagine at once the difference in attitude of the two men. Alcott went most certainly like a dignified martyr, wrapping



his long cape about him and carrying his walking stick like a longstaff to fend off contact with Sam Staples or with whatever culprit happened to be lodged in jail that wintry day. Alcott went in dull dignity that shed dullness over the entire event and made it unremembered ever since. Thoreau, I feel sure, "carried it off" better than that. Whoever saw him and Mr. Staples going the few rods from the cobbler's to the jail saw at once that a man was making an issue of a principle and ceased that more would be heard about it as time went on. The culprits in the dooryard of the jail knew as this pair approached that an adventure was under way and that they were on the inside of something special. The ne'er-do-well with whom Henry Thoreau shared the cell talked to him all evening as to an equal and dismissed him at last by going to bed, leaving Henry to blow out the lamp when he pleased. You know as well as I do that Thoreau went through the entire adventure in his Dunbar-like way so as to savor all of it. He left no stone of the jail-house unnoticed, he praised the whitewash of his cell, and seems to have felt that the bread and pint of chocolate for breakfast was somewhat better than traditional bread and water.

It is so with his house at Walden. Others but played at retreating to their shanties; Thoreau sucked all the marrow out of the experience and savored every bit of it. He made his pondside life a frontier experience more real than, for example, Eliery Channing ever knew in his actual frontier cabin on the prairie north of Woodstock, Illinois. While Thoreau lived at Walden he packed meaning into every day, concentrating it as if he knew living was dear and none of life must be wasted. The "hermit of Walden" was a very public hermit. Farmers along the Lincoln Road, woodchoppers happening by, men cutting ice, pickerel fishers all were given the benefit of a hermitic conversation which resulted at last in their having given him the benefit of all they knew. I really suppose that while Thoreau was still at the pond, even years before his book appeared, his was the best known "hermiting" in America.

There always was a flair in the way Thoreau carried through an incident that made it first of all his own however much precedent there may have been for it here or there. Thoreau heightened the action and made it dramatic in a way that few people have ever been able to do. This I call the Dunbar in him, for it was his mother who showed the same quality in her actions, her nature picnics for the children, her wearing of a yellow ribbon around her hair, even her dishing up food at her table, concerning which an unsympathetic commentator and one whose dislike she heartily reciprocated, Mr. Sanborn, declared that if it were but a dish of potatoes, she would so dress them up and so praise them that they seemed to the boarders a thing of beauty and a joy forever.

Nor was Thoreau through with an action when he had savored it. His authorship stood him in good stead. The quiet adventure of an excursion on the Concord and Merrimack is heightened into a voyage upon which the riches of history, mythology, and poetry are brought to bear. The little jailing (big in its issue, but small in itself) is given the values of an historical imprisonment and presented significantly but never heavily, for the light of Thoreau's humor plays over the account as it does over everything he wrote. Could Alcott have written about his imprisonment so delightfully? I am sure not. Thoreau has made his night in jail so memorable that it is almost as if he were the only man in the history of America who ever went to jail for conscience' sake.

Lowell in almost the one good paragraph of his 1865 essay on Thoreau saw the same creative authorship in Thoreau's writing about nature and says of him, not without Lowellian exaggeration of Henry's deficiencies but with honest statement of his virtues and abilities:

"It is curious, considering what Thoreau afterwards became, that he was not by nature an observer. He only saw the things he looked for, and was less poet than naturalist. Till he built his Walden shanty, he did not know that hickory grew in Concord. Till he went to Maine, he had never seen phosphorescent wood,

a phenomenon early familiar to most country boys. At forty he speaks of the seeding of the pine as a new discovery, though one should have thought that its gold-dust of blowing pollen might have earlier drawn his eye. Neither his attention nor his genius was of the spontaneous kind. He discovered nothing. He thought everything a discovery of his own, from moonlight to the planting of acorns and nuts by squirrels. This is a defect in his character, but one of his chief charms as a writer. Everything grows fresh under his hand."

The book Walden seems to me the culmination of all these traits that make Thoreau the one and only Thoreau. He took an adventure whose defects can be seen by the pedestrian mind of any man-in-the-street and raised it above its deficiencies into one of the great seekings of man into the very center of reality.

And he did it with spirit that made it a living event. The book is true to its subtitle, truly "life in the woods" because it so truly comes to life. Who would have supposed before Walden that there were so many wonders there between the Lincoln road and the railway? Who before ever felt the walled-in friendliness of Walden Pond? Or whose imagination before had guessed that just over the hill to the west the land lengthened out to the prairies of the West or the steppes of Tartary? These remained to be Thoreau's discoveries. Over them he cast the spell that even Lowell perforce must feel. It is so with his housebuilding. What an enterprise that proved to be under his pen! So with his mode of living -- an adventure in economics, not an experiment. Whimsy played with seriousness all through the book. If dozens of men had lived in shanties (as dozens did) only Thoreau seems to have really done it, because only he tells us creatively about it.

That is the prime secret of his authorship, of any authorship, that wonder be given to the commonplace, that an experience pass through an alembic which remakes it into the experience of the author only. And in the last analysis that is the reason Thoreau will be read and re-read: doing little or nothing original, he did everything originally and invested it all with life under the magic of a pen in an able hand.

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THOREAU: POET AND PHILOSOPHER by Rella Ritchell.

(Editor's Note: Miss Ritchell has submitted sufficient material to fill an issue of our bulletin. But because of both copyright difficulties and a large backlog of manuscripts on hand, we have been forced to reduce her papers to the following, which, we trust, convey the spirit of the full papers.)

In this confused, chaotic and confoundingly bewildered world of today in which everyone readily admits that things are no longer what they used to be in the long distant past--and in which by the same admission no one does anything about it--it is well to take inventory, as one must eventually, noting the distance we have traveled up the wrong alley, just where it was we blundered into this sad state of affairs, and more important--how to get back. How to reclaim something of the serenity, or a modicum of the serenity that we once had--at least a small arc of the truth that we in our "superiority" once thought we possessed. If the Creator were to look down upon man as he created him in His own image, He would perforce by our "calculations" be enjoined to think that He had better make a new start--the picture of confused bewilderment in which we find ourselves being quite readily seen as the opposite of being made in His own image.

There were two men writing in the "golden era of American literature" who were seers and prophets and poets in the truest sense of the word. They saw all this coming and raised their pens in warning and admonition. Walt Whitman and Thoreau, each writing from differing vantage points, but arriving at the same conclusion, who were scarcely heard in the wilderness then, but now as is the way of poets and prophets, they are being heard and quoted. This is the hour that they so readily foresaw--the hour of our ultimate madness as the ultimate conclusion of all our blunderings. To these one may every easily add the name of that gentle philosopher and seer--one whose close reading of between



the lines and not so between--would readily disclose an astuteness and satiric sharpness not usually associated with Carlyle's remark to Jane as he left them for the return home: "There goes an angel!" Ralph Waldo Emerson too raised his voice in the clarion call back to simple living and high thinking--something we seem to have lost track of. These men, seers and prophets and poets, were as usual, not heard in the main, as the exigency of the times demanded that they should be. Of Thoreau surely it could be very well said that he was largely ignored or ridiculed. Walt Whitman was first recognized in England. The gentle Emerson found his waiting audience in New York at a twenty-five cent admission and in the eager virile West.

And now over a hundred years have passed since those great innovators gave their message to the world; and in these years the machine age, the era of rapid transportation has multiplied the madness of the years beyond the far-reaching imagination of a Thoreau, a Walt Whitman, an Emerson, until a weary and bewildered world reaches for the truth that was of them. The fame of Henry David Thoreau increases from day to day, far beyond his own imagination; and the question often arises why this man of obscurity, this man of simplicity has become the Man of the Hour. The reason is not hard to find. As we have gone far afield from the realities, the simplicities of Thoreau's day, as we have mounted higher and higher in the scale of synthetic artificialities and found how hollow it all is, our hearts and minds have turned to the "simplify! simplify!" of Thoreau so sincerely and pointedly discussed in WALDEN--and as well, of course, in practically every line he wrote.

Perhaps his most oft-quoted line in WALDEN remains "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." This was clearly and easily discernible to Thoreau in the simplicities that were Concord's. Even in that rural village it rang a bell for Thoreau. What would he say today in such metropolitan areas as New York and Chicago--where the desperation is not so quiet--where it does more than ring a bell--where it is seen and felt in every passing face, in every pushing body? And of course this straining at the leash is by no means confined to such congested areas as New York. It is a disease that has overwhelmed all of America, where the materialism of this age has a more ready means of accomplishing its deadly work in a country of such rich resources as the United States. As Thoreau saw the coming of the "iron horse" on its way to Fitchburg as a forerunner of what was happening, so he foresaw an even greater involvement in the madresses that were to follow. His disgust with the gold rush was one expression of the low tide in which he knew America was immersing herself. His "Thank God" they cannot cut down the clouds" as he saw his contemporaries despoiling the forests often occurs to me as I see airplanes whirring over.

We today turn to Thoreau as to a mighty rock in a troubled world and his fame grows by leaps and bounds as the swift seasons roll. He had thoughts that were fundamental and not only did he express them in the most economical and straight-forward fashion, he did more--he lived them. He went to Walden to "live a life, not to make a living." And further he was going to find out about life--if it were mean, well that too he wished to learn--so that when he came to die he would not find that he had never lived. So many die who have not lived before.

With Thoreau this certainly did not happen. He lived. He lived to the fullest the realities, lived them in great simplicity. And to us he left the precious heritage of that simple living and high thinking. Of all the Concord group he joyed the most in living. The sun shines through every page that he wrote. There is a serenity, a poise, a calm enjoyment of living not equalled, far less surpassed by any writer of his time. For him "life sat waiting with the sunshine in her eyes" literally. Earnestness is there, but it is not grim earnestness. His sense of humor playing through the warp and woof of his garment is one of the great delights in reading him. He had, in the modern sense, fun. And it was entertainment that grew out of the very sinews of living. As he was not dependent upon the imposing Philharmonic Symphony for his music, for was he not to say that he who

does not hear the music emanating from the telegraph wires on a frosty morning or in the barking of a dog did not know what music was--so he was not dependent upon the theatre for his amusement--nay, he found it in life itself, in the daily round of his pursuits.

Much is said and stressed upon these days on style in writing. One must have "style." And just what is style? Is it something to be acquired, an external thing outside of the realm of the writing itself? Not at all. It is an inherent part of the writing itself, emanating from the personality of the writer himself. Of no writer is this fact any truer than of Thoreau. Recently in picking up a notebook of mine with quotations from writers as various as Rousseau, Elbert Hubbard, Thoreau, and Thomas Jefferson, I immediately spotted what was Thoreau's. I had not the slightest difficulty. Here we find a perfection in style--the master of the sentence, of the paragraph. Here is an economy of style--just as his life was--not an extra adjective or adverb--nothing that in the slightest suggested a rococo style--nor what we may term "fine writing." The prose as well as the poetry is sturdy, shot through with sincerity, honesty--all permeated by a delightful sense of humor. There is nothing heavy here--no taking himself too seriously. And as Thoreau was to express his repugnance of the Do-good-er, the reformer, there is not a line in his writing to indicate that he came to make the world over, as the saying goes. He knew better. That he has made and will continue to make the world better, gayer, truer because of his genius, there is no doubt. But as Walt Whitman admonished us to "found no schools after me," knowing the utter impossibility of such quick accession to the fundamentals--"The elevator to success is not running, take the stairs!"--Evolution, mental, spiritual, and physical is a slow process. Both seers and poets knew it. They both bided their time. And their time has come--the full fruition of their message is upon us because so badly needed. Our times have caught up with what they foresaw so long ago.

Thoreau was happy in keeping his appointment with the pond lilies and being reporter to the universe. And be it said right here that those who saw in Thoreau the naturalist only--and there were such--saw not even a small arc of the gleaming truth that was Thoreau. As it was to Ruskin that a painting without man in it was no painting, so it was with Thoreau--man's relation to his universe was the paramount issue. He did not divorce himself ever from man--quite the contrary. Man was ever an inherent part of Thoreau; and he ever saw him in his vision of him as a truer and more sincere part of not only nature but in relation to his fellowman. Hence he was above all else a great philosopher and seer. And the poet is ever the seer. He points the way to a finer goal. But he points it in the centuries. And so he belongs to posterity ever--a precious heritage.

#### THOREAU AT FIRE ISLAND . . . . . WRH

Miss Rella Ritchell called our attention to an item in a July 1850 issue of Horace Greeley's NEW YORK TRIBUNE about Thoreau's visit to Fire Island in an attempt to find the body of Margaret Fuller Ossoli and some of her manuscripts. In trying to run down Miss Ritchell's discovery, we ran across four news items on his visit and think them worth putting into the record:

NEW YORK TRIBUNE, July 25, 1850: "Mr. Henry D. Thoreau, of Concord, Mass., left yesterday for Fire Island."

NEW YORK TRIBUNE, July 26, 1850: "Mr. Henry D. Thoreau is still on Fire Island and Mr. W. E. Channing, the brother in law of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, leaves this morning for the same place."

NEW YORK TRIBUNE, July 29, 1850: "We have just had a visit from a gentleman who left Fire Island on Friday evening. . . . Mr. Thoreau is still on the Island endeavoring to find the manuscript of Madame Ossoli's work on Italy, which is known to have reached the shore."

NEW YORK TRIBUNE, July 30, 1850: "Mr. H.D. Thoreau returned from Fire Island on Sunday afternoon last. His search for the body and manuscripts of Madame Ossoli was entirely unsuccessful, but, before leaving, he posted up notices in all public places, offering a reward for either."



## THE EAGLE AND THE SERPENT . . .

Mr. T. L. Bailey has called our attention to a Thoreau magazine which is entirely new to us and not listed in any of the bibliographies. It is *THE EAGLE AND THE SERPENT*, published in London, England, from February 15, 1898, to sometime in the latter part of 1902. It is subtitled "A Journal of Egoistic Philosophy and Sociology" and carries under the masthead on most issues, "Dedicated to the Philosophy of Life Enunciated by Nietzsche, Emerson, Stirner, Thoreau and Goethe, *THE EAGLE AND THE SERPENT* Labours for the Recognition of New Ideals in Politics and Sociology, in Ethics and Philosophy, in Literature and Art." Most of the nineteen numbers issued are devoted to an exposition of Nietzsche, but there is hardly an issue without quotations from Thoreau on "Egoism." And Issue No. 2, for April 15, 1898, contains a full page (p. 18) of quotations from Thoreau entitled "Egoism as Taught by Thoreau." The issue for July, 1901, announces "Next Issue (A Thoreau Number) Ready November First." But the next issue, for September, 1902, announces "Next Issue (A Thoreau Number) Ready January First." Only two more issues were published, both undated, and neither is a Thoreau Number. Apparently the magazine failed before they were able to issue the Thoreau number.

## A THOREAU MISCELLANY . . . . .

Dawson's Book Shop of Los Angeles, Calif., recently sold the personal library of President U.S. Grant. It included, surprisingly enough, a copy of *WALDEN* and of Thoreau's Letters to Various Persons."

Bronzini, Ltd., 5 E. 52nd St, New York, are advertising a Thoreau four-in-hand tie (\$7.50). A beautiful soft brown with blue and gold oak-leaves, which an accompanying brochure states was suggested by the binding of an early edition of *WALDEN*. The brochure goes on to summarize briefly Thoreau's philosophy of life.

An advertisement for *PUCK: THE COMIC WEEKLY* in the April 4, 1952 *US NEWS* features four famous bachelors--President Buchanan, Walt Whitman, Popeye,--and Thoreau.

An advertisement for Alpa Log Cabin Co. in the June 29, 1952 *MILWAUKEE JOURNAL* quotes *WALDEN* and suggests that their customers go back to nature with Thoreau. And the August 1952 *FARM JOURNAL* features a house inspired by Thoreau's comments on architecture in *WALDEN*.

According to the introduction of the *POEMS* of Emma Lazarus, when she visited Emerson in Concord, Ellery Channing gave her the pocket compass Thoreau used in the Maine Woods.

Says H.W. Tilman in his *MT. EVEREST*, 1938 (Came bridge, 1948, p.32) in his advice to mountain-climbers, quoting *WALDEN*: "Most of the luxuries and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind."

Dr. J. Garate, Colon 1193, Tandil, Argentina, will exchange copies of his excellent Spanish translation of *WALDEN* for American books on Thoreau.

There are a few extra copies of the Sturgis portrait of Thoreau distributed last spring to our members. They will be sold at 50¢ each, to cover mailing costs, as long as the supply lasts.

Many maps of the New Hampshire White Mountains show a "Thoreau Falls." Does anyone know its connection with HDT?

The June 1952 *AMERICAN FORESTS* has an editorial on "Thoreaus by the Millions" stating that many Americans are Thoreauvians at least in vacationtime.

In early June Roland Robbins of Lincoln, Mass., found a well preserved Indian arrowhead just 100 feet from the Walden cairn.

William Condry, the Nature Warden for the West Wales Field Society (Great Britain) is writing a biography of HDT for a British Great Naturalists series.

We have received no word from our president on the proposed mid-winter meeting of the Thoreau Society in connection with the MLA meeting in Boston in December, but hope that it may yet be organized. If you are interested, it might be well to write us or watch the bulletin board at the MLA meeting.

Thoreau has been quoted or referred to recently in a North Carolina Game Division Conservation pamphlet; in Louis Untermeyer's anthology *EARLY AMERICAN POETS*; in the *NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY BULLETIN*; in the 2/23/52 *SRL*; *A MANUAL OF WALKING* by Elton Jessup; *TWENTY-THREE BOOKS* by J.T. Winterich; a complaint in the *CHICAGO TRIBUNE* (4-6-52) that he was not included in Univ. of Chicago's new set *GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD*; Joseph Wood Krutch's *DESERT YEAR*; a note on Thoreau as a source for FDR's freedom from fear speech in *CHEMICAL AND ENGINEERING NEWS* for 2-18-52; *POPULAR ECONOMICS* for April, 1952; H.D. Allison's *DUBLIN DAYS OLD AND NEW* (N.Y.: Exposition Press) contains a photograph of T's Monadnock camp; the January issue of *HARPER'S*; the Jan. issue of *THE WORD*; the Dec. *LADIES HOME JOURNAL*; W.R. Irwin's *CHALLENGE: AN ANTHOLOGY OF THE LITERATURE OF MOUNTAINEERING*; the Feb. *HARPER'S*; a radio sermon by Rev. V.N. Peale on 3/16/52; the new biography of Vachel Lindsay by Mark Harris; the Unitarian Lenten Manual for 1952.

The April 6th broadcast of "Invitation to Learning" was devoted to a discussion of *WALDEN* with Lyman Bryson as chairman, and Edwin Way Teale as one of the guests.

Readers wishing to obtain copies of the Dutch edition of *WALDEN* may obtain cloth-bound copies for \$3.50 and paper-bound for \$2.00 from the European Book Centre, Postbox 5022, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Members of the Thoreau Society might well borrow a book off junior's nursery shelf and read the chapter about how pencils are made. The book is *The Lollypop Factory - and Lots of Others* by Mary Elting and Margaret Gossett (Doubleday & Co., 1946). Pencils are made in factories very much as Thoreau made them. The chapter doesn't mention Thoreau, but it mentions three of his specialities as a pencil maker: making the best pencils, floating the finest black lead by means of an air current, and grabbing exactly twelve pencils each grab in packing them. (Of course, if you'd rather know how lollypops are made, there's a chapter on that too.) - R.A.

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I am indebted to the following for information used in this bulletin: R. Adams, F. Babcock, W. Conant, W. Condry, J. Cooley, G. Hendrick, C. Hoagland, A. Kielpinski, A. Kovar, N. Lehrman, F. Moore, F. Piper, R. Ritchell, A. Shedd, R. Stowell, A. Volkman, A. Wesley, K. Whitford, G. Wright, and H. Zahniser.

The Thoreau Society Inc. is an informal organization of several hundred students and followers of the life and works of Henry David Thoreau. Membership is open to anyone interested. Fees are one dollar a year; life membership, twenty-five dollars. A price list of back publications may be obtained from the secretary. All material, unless otherwise assigned, is compiled or written by the secretary.

The officers of the society are Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill, N.C., president; Mrs. Caleb Wheeler, Concord, Mass., vice-president; and secretary-treasurer:

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